DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 293 162 CS 506 071

AUTHOR Oglesbee, Frank W.
TITLE Paradigm, Persona and Epideictic: The Lovesongs of Eurythmics.
PUB DATE Mar 88
NOTE 32p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Popular Culture Association (18th, New Orleans, LA, March 23-26, 1988).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Audiodisks; Bands (Music); *Content Analysis; Figurative Language; Media Research; Models; *Music; Musicians; *Popular Culture; Speech Communication
IDENTIFIERS Communications Research; Dramatistic Criticism; Love; *Lyrics; *Popular Music

ABSTRACT

A study examined the lyrics of the lovesongs of the musical partnership Eurythmics (David Stewart and Annie Lennox), a popular music group. The method used was based on the James Chesbro study, which classified lyrics using a critical paradigm that combined Northrop Frye's hierarchy of communications systems (Ironic, Mimetic, Leader-centered, Romantic and Mythic) with Kenneth Burke's four-step dramatistic process (Pollution, Guilt, Purification, Redemption). Frye's hierarchy, based on the relative intelligence and abilities of the central character compared to the audience, was synthesized with Burke's process, based on behavior. The purpose was to classify Eurythmics' lyrics to see how closely they fit the pattern for the early 1980s established by the Chesbro study, and to see how their work had changed over time, if it had. In-depth analysis was done on their first five albums ("In the Garden," "Sweet Dreams," "Touch," "Be Yourself Tonight," and "Revenge") by scrutinizing the lyrics of their songs, the duo's comments, and reviewers' opinions. Results showed a shift in the Eurythmics' work towards a more romantic outlook in both Romantic and Leader-centered songs, which indicated a correlation to the findings of the Chesbro study. Also, album by album, the incidence of lovesongs rose 40%. (Fifty-one notes are appended.) (MS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED293162

PARADIGM, PERSONA AND EPIDEICTIC:
THE LOVESONGS OF EURYTHMICS

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Frank W. Oglesbee

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

by

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Frank W. Oglesbee, Ph. D.

Associate Professor

Department of Speech Communication

Eastern Illinois University

Charleston, IL 61920-3099

(217)581-6306

Presented to the 1988 meeting of the Popular Culture Association, New Orleans, March. Copyright 1987 ©

CS506071

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Complete Paper

This study of the lovesongs of the musical partnership Eurythmics (David Stewart and Annie Lennox) was prompted by a study of the fifteen top-selling songs for each year, 1955-1982.[1] Chesbro, et al, classified lyrics using a critical paradigm formed by combining Frye's hierarchy of communications systems (Ironic, Mimetic, Leader-centered, Romantic and Mythic) with Burke's four-step dramatistic process (Pollution, Guilt, Purification, Redemption). They found that all songs could be so classified, although many did not contain all the dramatistic steps. The researchers did find typical themes for songs in each system, and patterns of systems and themes which clustered into five eras within the time covered, ending with the era of Pragmatic Skepticism, 1980-1982, whose songs reflect tension between cynicism, leader-centered concepts, and romantic notions. They conclude that such a "pragmatic and skeptical perspective is unlikely to provide an enduring method of dealing with human relationships."[2] They did find tenuous indications of at least a partial return to the Era of Interpersonal Romance, 1955-1959. They plan to conduct another study at the end of the decade, to see what changes, if any, have occurred in popular song.

This interim study concentrates on the lovesongs of a group whose success began in 1983, the year after the cut-off date for the Chesbro study. The original purpose was simply to classify their lyrics to see how closely they fit the pattern for the early 1980s established by the Chesbro study, and to see how their work had changed, if it had. Eurythmics was chosen because their first album was released in 1981, because almost everything they record they also write and compose, because they work from a consistent philosophy which includes varying their means of delivering their songs, and because their five albums and

two world tours to date offer sufficient text and reviewers' opinions for the study.

One immediate change was to include comment on the music and performance, as well as the lyrics of the songs. Popular song as an epideictic celebrates and laments by ceremony, not solely by the logos of the lyrics. Moreover, the success of music videos is important, as many of the record-buying audience (the younger ones, anyway) are introduced to groups and songs through music videos. To keep the resulting study to a reasonable length, only the lovesongs of Eurythmics were chosen to report on. These 28 out of 46 songs are considered chronologically, album by album. The result reveals not only changes in the use of systems and themes, but a developing female persona as the central character of most of the songs. Before reporting on the work of Eurythmics, a summary of the critical paradigm will be given.

HIERARCHY AND DRAMA

Frye's hierarchy is based on the relative intelligence and abilities of the central character, compared to the audience. The term audience may refer to the public, who witness a performance or listen to a song, or a Significant Other addressed by the persona, or the performer's viewpoint. (In Eurythmics' love-songs, an Other is addressed in all 28 cases, a Lover or potential Lover in 27). Burke's dramatistic process is based on behavior. The methods are combined as follows.

1. Ironic system. The central character is less intelligent and less able to control people or circumstances than is the audience. This character causes the Pollution (violates norms) and is so identified (Guilt) by others, who take

steps to correct the matter (Purification) and restore the system (Redemption) with the central character ready to pollute again. The truly Ironic character does not learn. In songs, major Ironic themes are: frustrations of lost love; contradictions in personal life; nostalgia, and agony caused by people not meaning what they say.

2. Mimetic system. The central character has intelligence and abilities equal to the audience. Pollution is minor, often accidental, often shared, and Guilt easily admitted. Characters purify and redeem themselves, with the system restored as they learn from experience. Such songs usually celebrate activities all can engage in, or emotions all people feel.

3. Leader-centered system. The central character is superior in intelligence and ability to control other people, but not to control circumstances. The Leader's values are violated, and the Leader takes steps to restore the system. Songs emphasize either the Leader as rugged individual or the Leader's attempts to control others.

4. Romantic system. The central character has superior intelligence, and some unusual quality or qualities, such as superior insight, endurance, or sensitivity. While the Leader assumes responsibility for correcting a situation, the Romantic character further identifies the blame to allow for correction. The Romantic character uses the exceptional powers to produce the corrective acts, which may well be taken by others. This central character is recognized as the bearer of virtue or moral worth.

Romantic themes are: (1) love as a complete definition of a relationship, (2) the instinctive nature of love, (3) love conceived positively as possession, and (4) importance of looks and sex in love affairs.

5. Mythic system. The central character is godlike, much superior in all ways. Problems beyond human control set off a drama; forces are at fault. The powers of the central character Purify and Redeem by establishing a new system. Themes are: (1) the power of fate, (2) dreams as meaningful referents, (3) the depiction of superhuman or nonhuman creatures, and (4) conditions set in no time or space, or in spatial and temporal conditions yet to occur.[3]

POPULAR SONG AS EPIDEICTIC

Popular song is a rhetoric of the now, presenting a ceremony of celebration or lamentation to persuade of itself; the song and the performers sell the message by striking emotional resonance and agreement in the audience (listeners) and thus in the marketplace. Ethos, pathos, and logos are presented in a ritual condensation. Ethos is evidenced by logos (often given as self-evident) and pathos; the words and logic of the lyric, in congruence with the music and singing, persuade the hearer of the validity of the ethos.

Thus, in the particular case, Eurythmics' delivery is a significant part of the ceremony: Stewart's music, often drawn from urban noises as well as an eclectic musical background, and Lennox' choice of vocal technique as well as words, give meaning beyond, and sometimes other than, that which is on the lyric sheet. Part of Eurythmics' ceremony is that they wish to be called Eurythmics, not the Eurythmics: the word is what they do, not who they are.

EURYTHMICS AND THEIR MUSIC

Stewart (a journeyman in popular music since he was 15) and Lennox (who decided to try a singing career after a fellowship in classical flute at the

Royal Academy of Music), formed Eurythmics in 1981 after the dissolution of their previous group, the Tourists. They decided to make music that would reflect, as they have said consistently, the dualities of life, its contradictions. The music would balance "energy, sweetness, and alienation,"[4] and often be melancholic, yet tinged with humor, because they "love that sort of duality. It's the subject of nearly every song we've ever written [Stewart]."[5] They decided to write out of their own experience first, then see if an audience liked it, instead of writing for a mass audience first. Lennox expressed it as trying to "reflect as many of those [life's] diversities as possible and hope that at least some of the things you're trying to put across touch a familiar feeling or need in the audience."[6]

With this approach, they recorded their first album, In the Garden, which fits the era of Pragmatic Skepticism.

IN THE GARDEN[7]

This album did not sell well when first released (with the later success of the group, it has continued to sell), perhaps because it is overly skeptical, even cynical. Stewart characterized it as being "about the decay of everything."[8] Some of the critics liked it, including one who described himself as "a man who hated the Tourists." He did find every track "far too long," but admired the "overall macabre, melancholy feel," singling out the lovesong, "Never Gonna Cry Again."[9] Another found it "a moody, gothic vision of urban nightmare and personal hope, wrapped in an expert variation of German synth-pop."[10] Apparently, both critics discerned what Eurythmics were trying to do, even if the commercial result was disappointing.

As is typical in popular music, the album's release was accompanied by a tour. One critic concentrated on Lennox' singing, saying she conveyed "a sense of irony, anger, and understated power; yet Annie adds more to it by varying the pace and dynamics, injecting urgency."[11] Another found the music "a bitty paradox of heaving drum machine patterns and spineless synth backing." He wrote that Lennox "has an impressive voice and brave ideas of how to use it, but she's painting over wall paper," and concluded, "whatever you do, ditch the long black wig and post it back to Kate Bush."[12]

Of the four lovesongs on the album, only one is Ironic, "Belinda." "Belinda" is unusual for a Eurythmics song, in that the Other addressed is female, and that it is biographical, rather than autobiographical. The persona singing identifies Belinda as the guilty party, who misunderstands her relationship (contradiction in personal life). Belinda is distressed, although the persona assures her "your love is calling," and "he'd never leave you . . . he won't deceive you." The persona suggests that Belinda dry her tears, the only Purification mentioned, but takes no steps herself. The rapid pace and light lyrical delivery, similar to the Swedish group, Abba, indicates small concern with foolish Belinda.

"Caveman Head," is quite different, presenting a self-centered Leader, who uses a Romantic theme (physical attraction) in an attempt to control the Other. She coaxes seductively, "watch the way my hair falls down/see the way my hair falls down," but is essentially preoccupied with herself: "I can be so beautiful/I am very beautiful/I could be successful." This ethos is obviously not the virtuous Romantic persona.

These central female personae, the one ignorant and weak, the other strong

but uncaring and selfish, vanish after the first album. The Other addressed may be selfish or have wicked designs, but Lennox, since In the Garden, has made her singing personae at least more aware, often stronger, and eventually both romantic and realistic. They begin with the two disappointed Leaders of "Take Me to Your Heart," and "Never Gonna Cry Again," the other lovesongs of the first album. The persona of "Take Me to Your Heart," attempts to control the Other, who is identified as the guilty party for not responding. "Time after time/I try to contact you/But you won't take me to your heart." The Leader of "Never Gonna Cry Again," finding contact no longer worth the effort, accepts responsibility, "I just can't find a place to be hear you," makes a slight Mythic aside, "We're living in desperate times," and moves to a Rugged Individual solution, powerfully delivered: "I'm never gonna cry again/I'm never gonna die again." An ethical assertion of survival from an unpleasant situation is a typical Eurythmics duality, from these songs on. Stewart and Lennox revised the application of their philosophy, persevered as their characters do, and were successful with their second album, Sweet Dreams.

SWEET DREAMS[13]

The title song, Eurythmics' first commercial success, is sarcastic, indicative of the album's duality; the songs are about dreams which are not sweet, or which conflict with a harsher reality. However, the work moves away from the cynicism and despair of much of In the Garden, and the group's stage presentation was also altered successfully.

The critic who liked the gothic mood of In the Garden found that in Sweet Dreams Lennox and Stewart, "absorbed the best parts of Motown and Philly, and

expertly blended them with '60s pop and Eurorock influences. This is no slavish imitation but an expert fusion."[14] Another wrote that the album "goes far beyond the usual robotic disco and frothy Abba cliches to prove that transistorized while soul doesn't have to be wimpy."[15] An American critic echoed the approval of Lennox' singing, "one of the most distinctively talented new singers to emerge from the British synth-pop scene," and found that Stewart's "synthesized sound settings, which meld marvelously with Lennox' often multi-tracked vocals, also offer autonomous pleasures of their own." He concluded, "Stewart is that rare being, a knob-twirler who combines technical expertise and a try-anything attitude with seasoned musical taste--style, I believe it's called."[16]

At an early concert, one reviewer found the live music poorly mixed, "muddier than the Thames in flood," Lennox' performance "steely," and said "the music should tighten up and Ann Lennox should loosen up."[17] The music was tightened up and Lennox did loosen up. Much of the publicity and television coverage in particular of Eurythmics in 1983 and 1984 centered on her androgynous appearance. The long black wig was replaced by an orange crew cut, the gowns by men's clothes, the face often decorated with a painted mask. Part of the reason for the change was to finish any association with the former "pretty blond singer" of the Tourists: "I had to get rid of the poppy Annie Lennox. The strain was unbearable so I killed her."[18] Also, she wanted to avoid the sexual harrassment female singers sometimes get from an audience. The new portrayal wasn't "meant to be butch. No way." It was "useful in transcending the bum-and-tits thing, though. . . . I have received that sort of abuse onstage, and one has to find a way around it."[19]

The change in visual presentation apparently helped loosen up her performance. One critic wrote that she "stalked the stage with an ominous feline intensity,"[20] another of the "clarity and urgency of Lennox' stunning knock-em-dead vocal powers,[21] and a third became hyperbolic:

> One day someone will perfect a method of encapsulating Annie Lennox' voice so that the whole world can experience the wonder of it, so that it can bring fulfillment to anyone who understands anything beyond the basic power of human emotion.[22]

A fourth, although less transported, found similar appeal in Stewart's musicianship: "his bristling, often experimental and economic guitar work improved song by song until everything he touched turned to gold."[23]

The most complex of the lovesongs presented by this delivery is "Love Is A Stranger," which combines a Leader's admission of guilt with negative Romantic views of the nature of love, in a polluted system with no Purification available. The persona appears at first to offer viewpoint as audience, but then relates the situation to an Other. She warns "love, love, love is a dangerous drug/you have to receive it and you still can't get enough of the stuff." The "stuff" is "gilt-edged, glamorous and sleek by design/jealous by nature, false and unkind." The persona's admission of Guilt involves the Other, "I want you so it's an--obsession." The negative nature of love is also at fault, "Love is a danger of a different kind/to take you away/and leave you far behind."

"The Walk" takes a more realistic view of an Ironic situation, with contradictions in personal life. As with several Eurythmics songs, the primary

system, based on the persona, is Leader-centered or Romantic, but the plot, so to speak, is Ironic. In "the Walk," the persona perceives the situation and sees a possible Purification. Part of the problem is her own guilt, "I don't need to suffer," but part is the guilt of the Other. This Other, "beautiful/good to talk to," is better avoided, "when you touch my skin/I smell disaster." The solution, and hope for Redemption is expressed "step away--walk away/all I want is the real thing." Both she and the Other are involved in an unpleasant Mimesis with similar people, "walking on pavements/we collect in bars." When another act of Pollution occurs, the persona shifts to an Ironic accusation in the third person, "She's fallen down again."

The other two lovesongs from this album present Leaders with more determination. The persona of "I Could Give You" seeks to control her Other by persistent questioning, "How can you be so cold/with my arms to hold you?" (adding a Romantic inducement), while the delivery is more optimistic than in "Take Me to Your Heart," or "the Walk."

The persona of "Somebody Told Me," learning of the Other's Guilt, "somebody told me/something about you," is injured, "I'm still reeling," but summarizes the matter and announces her decision, "there's laughter and love/and there's a lot of pain/I never wanna see/your pretty face again." This persona could be the same one as in "Take Me To Your Heart," "Never Gonna Cry Again," "The Walk," and "I Could Give You," growing through a series of interpersonal relationships into a more independent character. The persona of "Love Is a Stranger" is apparently lost, with no Redemption, an interpretation reinforced by the video for the song. In the video, the persona, characterized by Lennox as "a very pricey whore. . . . a love object for sale,"[24] is first seen as an expensively

dressed blond (played by Lennox). On a professional call involving black leather she removes the blond wig to reveal short red hair, then appears in a man's pin-striped suit, and finally as an automaton, controlled by her chauffeur-pimp (Stewart). In this cautionary tale, which has a thematic relationship to similar warnings, as in the blues song, "House of the Risin' Sun," the persona is de-sexed, then de-humanized by her obsession.

As with In the Garden, much of the work on Sweet Dreams is skeptical, especially Love Is A Stranger. Yet there is more hope in the music, the delivery, and some of the lyrics than on In the Garden. Within a year from the release of Sweet Dreams, Eurythmics started their first world tour, and released their third album, Touch.

TOUCH[25]

One indication of a move from the Era of Pragmatic Skepticism is the increasing proportion of lovesongs, from four out of ten on each of the first two albums, to five out of nine on Touch. In addition, Irony is lessened, one song is actually happy, and another presents an exceptional female Romantic persona.

One critic summarized the album as filled "with expressive vocals and general excellence both of conception and execution. . . . musically adventurous." Of "Here Comes the Rain Again," he expressed surprise to find "Ms Lennox--whose video persona implies that sex with three or four bull mastiffs might be mildly diverting--singing a tender song about, uh, mutuality."[26]

Another found that "Lennox' rich alto vocals, enveloped in Stewart's unendingly inventive synthesizer arrangements, are continuing marvels."[27] Less

ecstatic, a third considered the album less effective than Sweet Dreams, but noted "Stewart does integrate more varied influences into the Eurythmics' usual format. The sharp beatbox cadences, brooding synth orchestration and Annie's unnaturally pure tone and robotic range still dominate, but there are reggae riffs and generic Caribbean motifs throughout."[28]

The appreciation of Stewart's musicianship, beyond his guitar playing, appears in most reviews of the album, reminding of a part of the rhetoric of popular song not addressed in the Chesbro study. For example: "the stop/start sections, punctuated by Dave's bristling guitar work, are most impressive. . . delightful high synth line . . . swinging, sympathetic strings,"[29] and "ever-greater sophistication in the musical arrangements (including horns, strings and back-up vocals) and in Dave Stewart's production."[30]

A Variety reviewer, seeing them in concert, decided they could be "one of the few acts that may survive the synth band phase of modern pop," noting they had started to move "in an R&B direction."[31]

At the concert, in April, 1984, Lennox was still sporting the orangish crew cut. By August, when the writer saw a concert, she had dropped the punkish hair color for short blond hair. The concert featured two, rather than the usual one, warmup acts. Lennox and Stewart, with three backup singers and a stage full of musicians, played a short main set, about an hour. They played several encores, for each of which they changed costumes. This visual ceremony of course does not translate to records, but in an age of music videos can be useful in persuading the audience into an even more receptive frame of mind; some of the costumes were those worn in Eurythmics' videos and promotional television appearances (other groups do the same).

The songs themselves range from a continuation of the unrequited love theme (Leader in Ironic plot), through a Romantic/Mimetic melancholia, to the joyous "Right by Your Side," and the strong Romantic persona of "Regrets."

"Cool Blue" is not only the song title, but the description of the reluctant Other addressed by the longing persona, "Cool blue--the color suits you/How will you stay this way forever?" The persona persists in her attempts, "I'll never stay away forever," and "I'm never gonna give you up." An Ironic touch is provided by the backing singers, as Chorus, commenting on the persona's imprudent choice and the Other's character: "How could she fall for a boy like that?" Despite this warning question, Chorus offers no suggestion for Purification, and the music, swift, upbeat, seems to celebrate the persona's optimistic persistence.

The unhappy persona of "Who's That Girl?" admits to some Guilt, "dumb hearts get broken, just like china cups," but attributes most of it to her Other. In Ironic fashion he says one thing and means another, causing her to complain, "your language of love has left me on the rocks." She demands to know "who's that girl, runnin' around with you?" The tableau stays in a state of Pollution--but not in the video for the song. In that rhetoric, the Other's assorted girlfriends abandon him, while the persona, a club singer, finds a better relationship with another man--the lyrics are the same, but the additional visualization completes the dramatistic process.

The melancholic "Here Comes the Rain Again" is also a tableau, with no particular Pollution or Guilt, except possibly the slightly Mythic influence of the rain, "falling on my head like a memory," which apparently prompts the persona to tell the Other what she wants, although she is unsure of his attitude toward

the relationship. "I want to walk in the open air/want to talk like lovers do/want to dive in your ocean/is it raining with you?" As there's no identified Guilt, and a desire to take common activities and emotions and use them to make an idealized relationship, the primary system, unusually for Eurythmics, is Mimetic.

"Right by Your Side," Eurythmics' first happy sone, is a joyous celebration of the nature of love, and of physical attraction. To a Caribbean carnival rhythm, the persona announces that "every one of us needs love, love, love." Again, this apparent viewpoint audience becomes personalized, as the persona asks for "two strong arms to protect myself," said arms to come from the Other, "no one seems to touch me in the way you do, . . . I'm so full of desire, you set my head on fire." The duality is indicated in the line, "when depression starts to win, I need to be right by your side." The music, the lilting vocals, and the support for the persona's philosophy, provided by backing singers' approving "yeah, yeah" chorus mark a departure from the, until then, typical Eurythmics song.

However, perhaps the most interesting entry is "Regrets," which, while more typical in theme, a frustrated love affair, is quite different in the details. Specific acts of Pollution and clear accusations of Guilt are not given, but the persona characterizes herself as someone of unusual qualities, "I've got a delicate mind, I've got a dangerous nature." In a new version of the blues cliche, "you'll miss me when I'm gone," she tells the Other, "I'm an electric wire and I'm stuck inside your head." Her special qualities are combined with a warning on the termination of the relationship: "I'm a hungry Mohican, I've got a razor-blade smile/So don't you come near me, I've got singular style." This is

followed by a Romantic expression of mobility seldom uttered by a female persona, "Where I go to, no one knows/Find me where the cold wind blows." In song, female mobility is commonly expressed in terms of going with a man. Single males roam freely, females do not. In a railroad blues song, Jimmy Rogers sang that a man with the blues "gets on a train and rides/but a woman with the blues just sits down and cries." Even in happier circumstances, female mobility is constrained, as in Judy Collins' "My Father," where the youngest daughter sings, "all my sisters soon were gone, to Denver and Cheyenne/marrying their grownup dreams, the lilacs and the man." The persona of Ian Tyson's "Someday Soon," waits for her man, who is thoroughly identified as mobile: he is "from Southern Colorado," is "just out of the service," he "rides the rodeo," and is "likely drivin' in from California." She waits, and "if he asks, I'll follow him."

Rock music has been particularly male-dominated. In this context Lennox' lines of equal mobility are significant. They are made more so by the vocal and musical support for the correctness of her position, further moving the persona from Leader to Romantic. A considerable portion of the song is given over to soloist, backing singers, and musicians supporting the declaration of individual integrity. The particular lyrics are "Black is red, and red is white/in this country I do what I like . . . .That's right, that's right, that's right, that's right!"

This song combines the strong female persona often found in rhythm and blues with the eclectic musical arrangements of Stewart, who's said, "arranging is my favorite thing. I think that nothing arrangement-wise is impossible and shouldn't be put together."[32] This combination became more important in the next two albums, as Stewart and Lennox moved sharply away from the synthesized

approach and cynical lyrics to songs derived more from rhythm and blues musically, with a greater proportion of love songs, departing from the skeptical pragmatism of the earlier work.

BE YOURSELF TONIGHT[33]

After Touch, both Eurythmics moved into new stages, more professionally for Stewart, more personally for Lennox. Stewart produced records and videos for other groups, and reduced the synthesized content of the music. Lennox, in a 1985 interview, described changes in her own personality. After a normal childhood, she became "very moody, very easily depressed . . . withdrawn . . . trying to cope with who I was and really very confused about it." This "went on from the year fourteen to right up to thirty [she was born on Christmas, 1954]." However, "something is starting to dawn on me, that it doesn't have to be like this . . . It is possible for me to turn what seems to be useless, hopeless and despairing into something that is valuable."[34]

This attitude, operating within the Eurythmics' paradigm of musical duality, is reflected in Be Yourself Tonight (and the most recent album Revenge). They had decided to make an album based on rhythms and blue and soul influences. Stewart said of the result, "you wouldn't even think it's the same band. That's why we called the album Be Yourself Tonight, we stand for a kind of individualism."[35] In another interview he said, "we didn't want to be known as the one-off synth-pop duo, so we thought we'd play and make it real."[36]

Critical response to the change was largely positive. One critic wrote, "you're tempted to ask for an encore of this roof-raising stuff before their restless inventiveness moves them on to something quieter."[37] Another found the

album more calculated than inspired, but admired Stewart's ability to "turn a second-hand idea into a first-rate single," with his "ear for detail," although "mostly it's the efficient economy of his arrangement that turns the trick." He found a congruent ability in Lennox: "always finds the right balance between melodic construction and vocal communication, so that even the most cliched phrases--the chorus to 'It's Alright,' for instance--take on a powerful immediacy."[38]

It may be as well to begin the analysis with "It's Alright," which does tread on familiar ground, celebrating the revival of a Romantic system: "It's alright, baby's coming back/and I don't really care where he's been." The fourth line contains a passing admission of Guilt, "I won't turn him around this time," but the persona quickly establishes her Romantic qualities by telling the Other what she will do to maintain the system: "I'll be your ledge (you can lean upon me)/I'll be your bridge your flowering tree." She will also be, inter alia, night, destiny, comfort, grace and dignity. Their love will transcend circumstances: "when the world falls in decline/I'll be yours and you'll be mine." With this song, Lennox' lyrics start to present a new persona, with more love to give than in previous lyrics. The desire to have love returned was frequently expressed ("Take Me To Your Heart," "Cool Blue"). The need to maintain love was also expressed, as in "Here Comes the Rain Again," and "Right by Your Side," but previous personae were not so capable of giving.

Previous personae also did not receive as much of what they wanted as does the one of "There Must Be An Angel," dedicated to, and styled after, Stevie Wonder (who plays harmonica on the album). What appears Mythic in its celestial references turns out to be a highly sentimental Romantic song about the effects

of an exceptional Other, revealed through the state of being of the persona: "No one on earth could feel like this/I'm thrown and overblown with bliss/there must be an angel/playing with my heart." After continued description of this state, she finally addresses the Other in the last verse, attributing her ecstasy to "celestial intervention/leaving me the recollection/of your heavenly connection." Some reviewers found the song saccharine, but it does show a sharp break from the tragic obsession of "Love Is A Stranger." Less extreme are "Here Comes That Sinking Feeling," and "Better To Have Lost In Love," with strong personae and optimistic music in the face of failed love affairs.

The sinking feeling is caused by the "sound of disappointment," a metaphor for the Pollution of which the Other is guilty, "Nobody hurts me like you do/you cut into me like a poison dart." However, the disappointment is from the particular relationship, not the nature of love, or force of circumstance, leaving alternatives open. "Better To Have Lost In Love" takes that cliche as its chorus, in itself a somewhat optimistic notion. Like "It's Alright," it begins with a confession, "I never meant to hurt you," but further defines the situation and lists other sources of Guilt, in circumstance, "something always gets right in the way," and in the Other, "it just might be your fault," and concludes "it seems I'll have to let you go."

Another cliche is the center of "I Love You Like A Ball and Chain," as the persona admits "I know I'm a fool but I'm stuck on you." Her Other is absent, and a phone call from him only adds to her distress, "when you're not here I'm just obsolete." Physicality in love is identified as the specific source of distress: "My bed is burnin' all through the night/you're the only one that can make me feel right." Although the situation is sad, and the persona admits to

some Guilt, the hope of the Purification is also indicated--he has not left for good. Moreover, the warmth and strength of Lennox' vocals, and the supporting music by Stewart indicate a not entirely unhappy victim of love.

The two other lovesongs on the album (seven out of nine selections) also deal with love gone awry. "Conditioned Soul" returns to the problem expressed in "Take Me To Your Heart," and "Cool Blue," as the persona tries to get commitment or action from the Other. Eliza Doolittle made a similar attempt with "Show Me," in My Fair Lady, and a more direct demand was made by the persona in Olivia Newton John's "Get Physical." The persona of "Conditioned Soul" begins with, "Darling, just be yourself tonight/there's nothing wrong with the way that you feel," offers a Mimetic support, "everybody's kissing someone," then demands to know, "When will you make up your mind?/I can't stand it." One writer commended, "to hear Annie Lennox of the Eurythmics wail 'when will you make up your mind? I can't stand it' is to experience the angst of the Eighties."[39] The song concludes with an intense repeat of the angst-laden wail; if not a happy ending, at least a bang and not a whimper.

"Would I Lie To You?," the principal single release from the album, celebrates the persona's escape from a failed affair. The Leader of this song does not merely survive, she exults. In the video of the song Lennox, as "Annie," a nightclub singer, is seen in an alley behind the club, breaking up with her macho lover. Later, as she sings the song, he enters the club and climbs on stage, only to be shoved off into the crowd. One interviewer commented that this seemed obvious. Lennox agreed, "it's quite heavy in a way," but "I don't relate to this male macho shit anymore, and that's what the song is really about."[40] The song presents the outcome of a dissonance between

contrasting ethos, as the persona asks: "Would I lie to you?/Would I lie to you, honey?/Now would I say something that wasn't true?" Obviously from her delivery, and the supporting brasses--and the supporting repetition of her lines by the backup soul trio--she would not. The authority of epideictic is manifested by the ceremony of the persona's ethos. The contrasting ethos is told "you're the biggest fake/that much is true." The persona announces her Purification through mobility, "Had all I can take/Now I'm leaving you." Her ability to function on her own is also emphasized, with solos and chorus of "I'll make--make it make it make it." Musically, the song, although different in style, most resembles "Right By Your Side," with its lilting passages, and exuberant brasses.

Although the purpose of this study is to examine correlations between Eurythmics' work and the critical paradigm used by Chesbro concentrating on Eurythmics' lovesongs, it is worth noting here that the other songs show similar changes. The "decay of everything" attitude on In the Garden is shown both in frustrated love ("Take Me To Your Heart") and in the commentary on family dissolution in "English Summer"--"Another change of light/The underlying truth/ Request to pack it in/No solutions." Similarly, "Would I Lie To You?" is on the same album as "Sisters Are Doin' It For Themselves," whose lyrics announce "this is a song to celebrate/the conscious liberation of the female state." Also, as "Would I Lie To You?" blames one guilty party, not love itself, "Sisters" notes "a man still loves a woman/and a woman still loves a man."

In this album, as critics noted, Stewart and Lennox applied their philosophy to traditional lyrical and musical ideas. Despite the continuation of cautionary tales of imperfect love, survival and celebration are more definiti-

vely stated than in In the Garden, continuing a progression begun with Sweet Dreams. The proportion of lovesongs also increases sharply after Sweet Dreams (supporting the trend indicated in Chesbro's study, to more popular songs on interpersonal romance), continuing into their fifth album, Revenge.

REVENGE[41]

The album was called Revenge, and the second world tour, begun in July, 1986, the Revenge tour. Stewart termed the album partly a response to "experiences we've been through to get where we are."[42] Lennox, in a different interview, referred to "personal difficulties, all sorts of trials and things," going on to say that revenge usually has a negative connotation, but "in this case I think it has a very positive image . . . . I think that this is the most positive thing that we could do to get back, if you like, at all the things that have happened to us."[43] (Living well is the best revenge?)

For the album, Stewart said, they wanted to try a "down-to-earth r&b" approach.[44] For the tour they planned a similar approach, "[Lennox] got it down to essentials, [on the last tour] we were visual almost to the point of theatricality. . . . This time it's just a simplified approach."[45]

Of the album, one critic wrote that it illustrates the "open secret" of Eurythmics, "their supremely confident technique in bringing together all the very best elements of pop, rock and soul and then presenting these diverse strands in an increasingly slick, but never smooth, format," and termed the album, "their most accomplished release to date."[46]

Another characterized their contributions thus: "he uses studio smarts to construct tracks that are models of streamlined efficiency, while she takes firm

command of a melody from the very first line," and gave them "high marks for versatility," concluding that they "convey a refreshing enthusiasm that other artists and jaded critics would do well to observe."[47]

Apparently, the work made a convert of one critic, who began his review, "when Eurythmics first appeared I didn't like them. . . . I really didn't like them," but went on to say, "I love Eurythmics and I am forcing all my friends to love them too. All that requires is making sure that they hear the new album."[48]

As for the look of the Revenge tour, the writer attended a concert in Chicago, and the presentation was indeed visually basic, compared to the previous tour: only about half as many people on stage, including just one backup singer. Lighting effects were mainly white patterns on a black background. Lennox and Stewart stayed in matching black-and-white costumes. Also, there was one warmup act. As a result of fewer people and simpler staging, the individual musicians had more opportunity to perform solo. Judging by crowd response in the filled outdoor theater, the basic approach worked at least as well as the more elaborate earlier one.

Eight of the ten songs on the album are lovesongs. Two Romantic ones present distinctly different attitudes. "The Miracle of Love" is a sentimental appeal to the Other to be open to love, for "the miracle of love/will take away your pain." The Romantic persona also glosses over whatever Guilt the Other has, "there must be a bitter breeze/to make you sting so viciously," and promises to "show you something good/if you open your heart/you can make a new start." Thus, the Romantic concept of the nature of love is combined with a persona who resembles that of "It's Alright," giving as least as much as she

receives.

Another generous giver, but on a somewhat different plane, is the casual Romantic of "Let's Go!," who first addresses the general audience, describing an event. This persona celebrates the physical attractions of an impromptu love affair, cheerfully explaining, "he was the kinda guy/I liked the way he looked/he has a red silk tie/he had a forties suit." A woman who knows what she wants, and is assertive about going after it, she tells him, "you're the kind of person I've been longing to adore." He replies, "the time is right to take a chance/cause I'm looking for a brand new romance." After they drive to Mexico, she suggests, "why don't we find a preacher man who can get us hooked?" He responds, "forget about the preacher man/let's do it on the ground." Under the circumstances, his is the better (less Polluting) suggestion, and the chorus of "let's go--I wanna fall in love, ooh hoo," suggests that disillusionment can wait. The love here is not the miraculous kind of the previous song, but not as much is expected from it. As with the mobility expressed in "Regrets," the sexuality expressed here is unusual in its directness for a female persona in popular music, although less so in recent years.

Three of the songs do deal with love's disillusions, presenting variations on a common pattern. The Leader persona of "The Last Time" characterizes the Other's ethos, "people like you just don't come clean," puts his Guilt and her Purification economically, "last time you're gonna let me down," and predicts no redemption for him, "who will you go to/when there's no one to betray?" "A Little of You" includes some Guilt by the persona, "there used to be a time/I wore my heart upon my sleeve," but again, the Other will suffer more, "everytime you try to hurt me/you know you'll only hurt yourself," and warns

"don't ask for love/I'll throw it back in your face." The persona of "Thorn In My Side" admits Guilt, which has been purged through punishment, "I should have known better/but I trusted you at first/. . ./I got what I deserved." The continuous Guilt is, of course, the Other's, "thorn in my side/that's all you ever were," and the purifying action is hers, "to run away from you was all that I could do." Again, the delivery indicates that the tragic part is over. (Who sees love plain and runs away will live to love another day).

The album also contains a different type of song for Eurythmics, the wistful Mimetic "I Remember You." The persona recalls the Other, "the backyard boy/hiding in the wreckage of broken dreams." Guilt was accidental and shared, "we were so young/we didn't realize/just what we'd done." The result is viewed nostalgically, as if a former home were demolished, "all the sweetness/has been taken out of this place/so many memories/are knocked down or replaced." Unlike the "decay of everything" that formed a central theme of the first Eurythmics album, this condition is regarded with compassion and sorrow, not cynicism and despair. As with "Miracle of Love," Stewart's arrangements are unusually subdued.

The final two songs return to Leader-centered romances, with the persona addressing a loved and loving Other. In "Take Your Pain Away," the persona wants to control circumstances. If it were possible, "I'd find a cure/and take your pain away." The Other is not present, but unlike "I Love You Like A Ball And Chain," this is not a source of despair, or a reason to state what the persona lacks, but an opportunity to offer support: "don't forget I'm always near/find comfort in these words I send/in this cold world." The Other of "When Tomorrow Comes" is present but asleep, "breathing shifts your careless head/untroubled by

the chaos of our lives." The persona promises "I'm gonna be the one/who'll be there/when you need someone to depend upon," and wants tomorrow to come so she can prove her love. "Wait till tomorrow comes," is repeated with variation in delivery, as a chorus.

DISCUSSION

First, as to the patterns established in the Chesbro study, compared with Eurythmics' lovesongs. The Chesbro study found that in 1980-1982, the Era of Pragmatic Skepticism, popular songs were roughly balanced among Ironic (29.5%), Leader-centered (25.0%) and romantic (27.2%).[49] Some indication was found of a return to the pattern of 1955-1959, the Era of Interpersonal Romance, when Mimetic (29.6%) and Romantic (43.7%) songs were more prominent.[50]

The probability that any given musical group's work would fit these patterns exactly is remote. Eurythmics' work does show a shift toward a more romantic outlook in both Romantic and Leader-centered songs. It also shows the Ironic touches the Chesbro study found in many current songs, usually in Ironic themes (frustrated love through non-response or betrayal from the Other, usually), although the harm this causes is less in the last two albums. Leader-centered songs have Romantic themes. Songs about interpersonal romance comprise 61% (28 out of 47 songs) of the albums' content. The one non-Eurythmics song (Hayes & Porter's "Wrap It Up," on Sweet Dreams) is a fast-paced celebration of love. Album by album, the incidence of lovesongs rises from 40% on In the Garden to 80% on Revenge. Only 7 of these (25% of the total) are Romantic, but five of these are on the last two albums. While Leader-centered songs account for 64% of the work (18 of 47), they include Romantic aspects.

This shift, however, is not a sign that popular music will return to the content of the pattern of 1955-1959. As Browne notes, most popular songs until recently, "placed women in emotional, passive roles, as home builders, bodies to be loved, inspirations to but tools of men."[51] The female personae of Eurythmics songs are emotional, but for the most part active and assertive women who may inspire but are not tools or chattel. Further they show development into more confident and capable people across the albums. The persona of "Thorn in My Side," is stronger and more capable than those of "Love Is A Stranger," and "Who's That Girl?" The persona of "Let's Go!" is more assertive and open in her sexuality than the manipulative one of "Caveman Head." Those of "Would I Lie To You?," "The Last Time," and "A Little Of You," are strong enough to confront the guilty Other openly and end the relationship. Finally, the personae of "It's Alright," "When Tomorrow Comes," and "Take Your Pain Away," are capable of acting interdependently without losing their identity or integrity; they can give as well as receive. If Eurythmics' work is an accurate indication (and it is reinforced by recalling the assertive personae of the American singer, Pat Benatar), equitable romance may be the next era in popular music.

Secondly, as to further research in popular song, both this study and Cherbro's have inherent limits. The former does not allow for the overview and pattern-establishment that the Chesbro study did. Conversely, the Chesbro study does not allow consideration of how a successful musical groups works out the details of their songs over a period of time. It is those details that the public buys; if the pattern were enough, any song which fit it would be successful. A paradigm for the music would be useful to complement the paradigm for the lyrics. Also, the top 100 popular songs are not the same as the top 100

country, or country-western songs of a year, nor is pop exactly synonymous with rock. Perhaps there are significantly different patterns, or significant variations on patterns in these broad areas, examination of which could refine the paradigm(s).

NOTES

[1]James W. Chesbro, Davis A. Foulger, Jay E. Nachman, and Andrew Yenneli, "Popular Music as a Mode of Communication, 1955-1982," Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 2(1985), p.115-135.

[2]Chesbro, p.131.

[3]Chesbro, p. 121-123.

[4]John Swenson, "Longplayers," Circus No. 291, 31 May 1984, p. 93.

[5]Kurt Loder, "Eurythmics: Sweet Dreams Come True," Rolling Stone, No. 405, 29 September 1983, p. 29.

[6]Mark Williams, "Tourists Keep Moving," Melody Maker, 16 February 1980, p. 19.

[7]In the Garden, RCA Records PL 70006, 1981. Essentially, Lennox is the lyricist, Stewart the composer, although they edit each other's work.

[8]Richard Harrington, "The Rock Chameleons," Washington Post, 21 March 1984, p. B15.

[9]Paul Strange, "Reviews," Melody Maker, 7 November 1981, p. 35.

[10]Steven Grant, "Eurythmics," Trouser Press, May, 1983, p. 46.

[11]Fred Williams, "Caught in the Act," Melody Maker, 11 December 1982, p. 36.

[12]Paul Colbert, "Eurythmics," Melody Maker, 17 April 1982, p. 30.

[13]Sweet Dreams, RCA AFL1-4681, 1983.

[14]Paul Strange, "Sweet Dreams," Melody Maker, 22 January 1983, p. 17.

[15]David Fricke, "Records," Rolling Stone No. 398, 23 June 1983, p. 58.

[16]Kurt Loder, "Eurythmics," Musician No. 59, September, 1983, p. 97.

[17]Ian Pye, "Hi-tech hits the hat rack," Melody Maker, 26 February 1983, p.

24.

[18]"Eurythmics," Melody Maker, 11 February 1984, n.p.

[19]Loder, Rolling Stone, p. 22.

[20]Stephen Holden, "Pop: Eurythmics at the Ritz," New York Times, 17 July 1983, sec. 1, p. 42.

[21]Richard Mackey Nusser, "Talent In Action," Billboard, 6 August 1983, p. 41.

[22]Simon Scott, "It's Alive," Melody Maker, 12 November 1983, p. 16.

[23]Paul Strange, "It's Alive," Melody Maker, 10 December 1983, p. 50.

[24]Johnny Waller and Steve Rapport, Sweet Dreams: The Definitive Biography of Eurythmics (Wauwatosa, Wisconsin: Robus Books, 1985), p. 78.

[25]Touch, RCA AFL1-4958, 1983.

[26]Jeff Nesin, "Records," Creem, May 1984, p. 55.

[27]Kurt Loder, "1984 Record Guide," Rolling Stone, Double No. 437/438, 3 January 1985, p. 111.

[28] Mark Coleman, "Eurythmics Touch," New York Rocker, March 1984, p. 44.

[29]Paul Strange, "Perfect Touch," Melody Maker, 19 November 1983, p. 47.

[30]Paul DuNoyer, "Great Mouth, good Trousers," New Musical Express, 26 November 1983, p. 29.

[31]Variety, 4 April 1984, "Eurythmics (10) Real Life (4)," p. 78.

[32]Bill Stephen, "Eurythmics," Music/Sound Output, July 1984, p. 49.

[33]Be Yourself Tonight, RCA AJL1-5429, 1985.

[34]Barbara Pepe, "Eurythmics," Musician, November 1985, pp. 13-14.

[35]Sasha S. [sic], "Eurythmics Interview: Would We Lie To You?," Rock, October 1985, p. 50.

[36]"The Ministry of Truth," Melody Maker, 4 May 1985, p. 27.

[37]Fred Schruers, "The Year in Records 1985," Rolling Stone, Double No. 463/464, 19 December 1985, p. 158.

[38]J. D. Considine, "Be Yourself Tonight: Eurythmics," Record, July 1985, p. 50.

[39]Rod Davis, "The Case for Indecisiveness," Playboy, August 1986, p. 16.

[40]"The Ministry of Truth," p. 29.

[41]Revenge, RCA AJL1-5847, 1986.

[42]Interview, MTV [Music Television network], Top 20 Countdown, 25 August 1986.

[43]Lynn Van Matre, "Eurythmics: They express themselves through the way they look and sound," Chicago Tribune, 20 July 1986, Arts Ec., p. 11.

[44]Interview, Entertainment Tonight (syndicated), 7 July 1986.

[45]Interview, MTV, 5 July 1986.

[46]Barry McIlheney, "The Odd Couple," Melody Maker, 5 July 1986, p. 27.

[47]Jon Young, "Record Reviews: Eurythmics," Musician, August 1986, p. 86.

[48]Glenn O'Brien, "Platter du Jour: Eurythmics," Spin, September 1986, p. 27.

[49]Chesbro, p. 131.

[50]Chesbro, p. 127.

[51]Ray B. Browne, Rituals and Ceremonies in Popular Culture (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1980), pp. 3-4.